COMIX WAVE 87. May, 1990.
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COMIX PLUGOLA

Guy Colwell has followed up his successful DOLL trilogy with a fourth issue, one which explores sexual relationships between men and women. Basically, an illustrated monologue with a humorous subplot, DOLL 4 tries to explain why women seem to prefer men who are mean to them over gentler men who would prefer to be helpful to them. Whether or not Colwell succeeds in answering the question, I will leave to the reader to determine. Like Colwell, I have seen sado-masochistic relationships continue for years. One I remember well concerned a woman who married four times and each time she picked the same type of man. They were all big and athletic and two were police officers. All four abused her verbally and physically as she said in her divorce complaints against them. I knew this woman when she was studying psychology at the University of California and we used to have coffee together. She had actually taken up the study of psychology hoping to find out why she kept making the same mistake about men again and again. I listened to her talk about finding a sensitive, caring man who would treat her like a person, etc., then she asked me to photograph her wedding and I took the pictures of her and number four, a man who proceeded to kick her around just as the first three had. I'm not going to pull a Colwell and try to explain this to you.

EL VIBORA is celebrating it's tenth anniversary with a special issue. $10 from J. M. Berenguer, Plaza Beatas 3, Barcelona, Spain. Adults only.

The complete *Acid Man Society* Series of Canadian artist Robert Pasternak (11 issues) is $5 pp. from Comix Wave.

Bob Vojtko is working on the JOHN DARLING strip with Tom Batiuk. One of the earliest Newavers, Bob is the creator of Fishtales, Low Budget Funnies, Coupons, and Playstocker. His most recent venture was a comic tabloid, the CARTUNE TRIBUNE out of his community in Lorain, Ohio.

DOLL is an android [gynoid?] and in her earlier adventures she was fought over by numerous men because she seemed the perfect woman, one who could be used sexually at any time without asking anything in return. DOLL had no vocal chords. The man who owned her could project anything onto her that he wished without fear of conflict. DOLL was perfect for the man who wanted sex and nothing else from a mate. The first three issues have been collected into a perfect bound book and you can get it at your local comic store. You have to be an adult, to be sure, because all of the sexual activity looks real even though DOLL is made out of latex. ❐

COLLECTORS AND CRITICS

In general, collectors can be divided into three categories. First, the rare patron-collectors who know what they want and order it from artists and artisans. This first category, in the historical past, helped to establish styles. Without the huge demand for portraits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for example, there would have been no great school of portrait painters.

Second, the middle-ground people, who buy what is fashionable, but collect fashionable art because they either like it without knowing why [it reflects their times is why] or have been taught to like it.

In the third category are the collectors for economic reasons. They buy and sell to make a profit. That is, in a tautoogical sense, they are collectors because they are collectors, but they enjoy the works of art they possess at the moment for their present and future value.

The one trait that all three types of collectors have in common is miserliness. They write small, seldom dotting "i's' or crossing "T's" and they are frequently costive. Once they own something, *anything*, they don't want to give it up.

The collector's role is almost as important to world culture as the critic's. Without collectors there would be precious little art produced in this world, and without critics, collectors would wonder what to collect. Even those few collectors who are knowledgeable about art will not go out on a limb without critical confirmation. Collectors and critics live within this uneasy symbiotic relationship. And artists--the poor bastards--who are caught in the middle, would starve to death without us.

Charles Williford.
THE BURNT ORANGE HERESY
1971.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT RETIRED POLITICIANS DOING TV COMMERCIALS?
I THINK THE WHOLE THING IS DEMEANING!
IT'S REALLY GOING TO GIVE COMMERCIALS A BAD NAME!
BATIUK/LYNCH
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PHOEBE & THE PIGEON PEOPLE, BY JAY LYNCH & JIM SIERGEY

I HATE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DOGS!
OH YEAH? HOW COME?
GRRR...
BECAUSE IT SHOWS THAT THESE PEOPLE DON'T HAVE THE NERVE TO BITE OTHERS THEMSELVES!

UNDERGROUND COMICS

Mick Cusimano

To debate about the influence of underground comics, first the term must be defined. For some, underground comics are described as art from the 60's emphasizing excesses of sex, drugs, violence, and radical politics. Sometimes these elements are there. But they can also be found in many modern mainstream comics. Most comics from the 60's as well as the rock music from the era may have very little to do with politics, the Vietnam war, etc. Amateur journalists and those who don't do much research are often guilty of taking the easy way out. If you can't understand something in artistic terms just label it as a reflection of the politics of the times. Listen to the Beatles, Hendrix, or the Stones' lyrics. The majority of what they write is personal imagery, poetry if you will. Not political ideology.

To illustrate what underground art is let me relate a tale of Salvador Dali and a fish. In the late 1930's Dali was commissioned to create a sculpture for the upcoming world's fair. Unveiling it for the committee, he caused pandemonium. He had created a woman's body with a fish's head. The members were irate. They banned his sculpture, citing that it would disturb the spectators. Dali argued, to no avail, that if it had been reversed, a woman's head on a fish's body [a mermaid], there would be no objection. the point being that the committee of judges, editors of magazines, art directors, television executives, etc., act as screens. They filter out and water down the art they commission before it gets to the public.

Underground comics or art skips the middleman, the censors, and ideally takes the product, raw as it may be, directly to the public.

This is how Underground Surrealist magazine was started. Five years ago, arriving in Boston, I met a couple of poets. I was asked to create cartoon posters for them. Having access to a copier, we printed thousands of posters each weekend and spent hours passing them out directly to passengers on Boston's subways. In addition we put many up on the walls of construction sites. Of course we got chased and yelled at occasionally but we got our message across straight to the people. That's what the First Amendment, freedom of speech is all about. It's the American way.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

The beauty contest is basically an advertising competition. Remember, it does not merely promote the bathing suits and make-up and the other products routinely advertised within and during the televised show, it also promotes an image and a lifestyle, one that is not shared by 99.99 % of the women who live and work in this country. Miss America is the monster who makes the lives of most women miserable, though few understand this or would openly admit it. She is the reason normal women feel insecure about their faces and their bodies and spend so much time trying to hide them with the products associated with Her Royal Emptiness. Miss America is the product. Looking at her, it is common to feel slightly hungry for some sugary breakfast cereal or soft drink or to develop a need to trade in the old family car for a new gas eater. We are so used to seeing that stereotyped body wearing that mask filled with vaselined teeth and glossy moist red lips that we forget what it does to us. Corporations buy Miss America and her spandex clones to associate with their products and lest you think this is purely a sexual sell, consider that the reverse is also true. Big Bottomline would rather have you eat and drink the crap he sells than have you enjoying any real sex. Think about this the next time you look at a cover photo of Miss America and get thirsty for a can of you know what.

COMICS AND CULTURE

Michael Stengl

Comics and culture? Culture being a curious term in this country with its hodge-podge of borrowed and imitated values. I say nay. Reflect culture, yes, [*Love and Rockets* /Mexican and Mexican-American lifestyles]; create an awareness or inform--yes, in the best of the medium; influence CULTURE? No, that being decided more by geography, religion [or lack of], education and economy. Big, big things. Advertising and TV have moved into a position of influence literally buying their way into our lives. Technology changes a culture but that's education and economy again. There may be, however, similar interests or lifestyles among cartoonists themselves, their friends and fans which might be a mini culture unto itself, but that's not popular culture, is it?

I don't know about HOMO PATROL by K. L. and Tom Roberts. They say it's about *bigotry in any form and the misunderstandings and horror that can arise from it.* You can get a copy for $4 pp from Tom, 333 S. East Avenue, #209, Oak Park, IL 60302, and make your own decision. To me, it was wordy and messagy, comparable to Colwell's fourth DOLL.

August 2-5, 1990

SAN DIEGO COMIC CON

San Diego Comic Con, P.O. Box 17488
San Diego, CA 92117, (619) 491-2089

Clifford Neal sent me a clipping about a teacher who showed MYSTIC PIZZA in her 7th grade class on filmmaking. The movie was made in Mystic, where Neal lives, and a lot of people from that community were in the film. Well, the teacher got the big chew from some parents who didn't like their kids seeing the movie. Hey, it had words like Fuck and Asshole i it and those teenagers have never heard those words, not in a town filled with fishermen and sailors and BOYS. It had some sex scenes, too, and, of course, there is nothing like that on TV and Mystic kids are kept pure and innocent until they are 21 and married to Mr. Right. People this naive are amazing, aren't they? They're like those folks who say things on the talk shows and think their families and friends aren't going to hear them in an era of VCRs. If I was a kid growing up in a small coastal town and there was a movie made about my town, how could I miss seeing that movie? If my parents said I couldn't see it, what would I do? I'd find a pal with a vcr and see the video some afternoon at his place, which I am sure most of the kids around Mystic have done by now. ***Those parents should have thanked that teacher for showing that film in a controlled situation where the ideas in it could be discussed.***

I didn't care for MYSTIC PIZZA, but I enjoy seeing the footage of Mystic, Connecticut, since Cliff Neal* has been a longtime member of COMIX WAVE. I suspect local people had the same reaction to the movie as I had to THE GRADUATE. We hooted when we saw Benjamin driving toward Berkeley on the Oakland Bay Bridge only to wind up at Stanford which is some 50 miles in the opposite direction.

*Clifford Neal is the editor of DR. WIRTHAM'S COMIX AND STORIES.